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Developing age-friendly communities in the Northern Gateway urban regeneration project

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Executive Summary

The report argues that the Northern Gateway should offer mixed, affordable and age appropriate housing and amenities. An equitable development plan should be developed, through community-led engagement, to ensure that the benefits of regeneration are shared amongst new and existing residents.

In 2018, Manchester announced the largest and most ambitious residential-led development in its history, with plans for up to 15,000 homes to be built over a 15-20 year period. The project, called the Northern Gateway, represents a major contribution to the City's strategy for residential growth and involves a collaboration with private developers, the Hong Kong-based Far East Consortium International Limited.

There is growing recognition that the housing offer in the UK is out of step with the needs and aspirations of older people. The housing crisis in the UK (and other European countries), is reflected in the limited housing options available for both younger and older age groups. In response to the urgent demand for housing for different generations, local authorities in urban areas are engaged in ambitious redevelopment projects, the Northern Gateway being one such example. Innovative new approaches will be required in order to ensure that new housing is attractive, accessible, adaptable, and within financial reach of those who wish to move, and that programmes are in place to support residents who want to remain in their current homes and neighbourhoods¹.

A key objective for the Northern Gateway should be ensuring that it can deliver housing and amenities suitable for a variety of social

groups and people of different ages. The planned redevelopment will take place in a context of significant pressures affecting urban life, illustrated by widening inequalities within and between communities, social isolation, and loss of social infrastructure (such as libraries and community centres)². To date, there has been limited academic research into the experiences of people ageing in areas affected by rapid urban change. Further, there is little agreement of, or understanding about, what makes an age-friendly or supportive environment for the growing number of people who are ageing in place³.

Researchers, policy-makers and service-providers need to consider the changing needs of older people both now and in the future, together with their families and the communities in which they live. The number of older people in Manchester is set to rise substantially. Estimates suggest that by the year 2036, 14% of the total population living in Greater Manchester will be aged 75 and over. This is an increase of 75% (2011), from 221,000 to 387,000⁴. Compared to the national average, a greater proportion of older people in Manchester are income deprived. In view of these trends, targeting urban regeneration strategies at different groups within the older population is essential. It is important to be attentive to the contrasting needs of a) different

ethnic groups, b) those with particular physical/mental health needs, and c) those living in areas marked by economic, health and social inequalities of various kinds⁵.

This report focuses on Collyhurst, one of the neighbourhoods included in the Northern Gateway redevelopment. The neighbourhood consists predominantly of socially rented properties – 1070 in total – with 77% of older people living in this type of accommodation. The proposal is for a mixture of housing types and tenures, offering both social and affordable homes. Collyhurst is a site which has been reshaped by the decline of local industries, demolition of housing, and loss of population. Over the last ten years, a succession of regeneration plans have been proposed and subsequently abandoned. As a result, there is a legacy of mistrust among some existing residents and a feeling that Collyhurst has become a ‘forgotten place’. Despite this, there is strong sense of belonging and community

among existing residents due to enduring social networks.

This report provides findings from research which included analysing urban regeneration policies, a review of academic literature on age-friendly communities, and primary research carried out in Collyhurst. A total of 22 interviews were conducted with a range of residents and regeneration stakeholders, as well as 2 focus groups with local residents. The research also involved developing a network of stakeholders and practitioners working on urban regeneration issues in Greater Manchester.

This report argues that, by incorporating age-friendly approaches, the Northern Gateway has the potential to become a flagship urban regeneration project. Lessons taken from the Northern Gateway project could be replicated across other cities in the UK, and equivalent schemes in other countries.



Shops and maisonettes in Collyhurst circa 1960-70
Source: Manchester Libraries, Information and Archives

The research found:

1. Collyhurst was described as a *'forgotten place'* by some residents who felt that there had been insufficient investment in local housing and amenities. Comparisons were made to other areas which had received and benefited from regeneration funding.
2. Various regeneration plans have been proposed for Collyhurst over the last ten years but were subsequently abandoned, creating mistrust amongst some residents.
3. Despite population loss and changes to social ties, the majority of residents want to remain living in Collyhurst and to *'age in place'*. Change was seen as inevitable and, for the most part, welcome. However, concerns were expressed about whether the type of regeneration proposed would result in the exclusion of the existing community.
4. The research found that the Northern Gateway should offer mixed, affordable, and age-appropriate housing. It should also prioritise the needs of existing residents and ensure equal access to services and amenities in the new Collyhurst.

This report makes the following recommendations:

1. **The Northern Gateway should seek to be an exemplar of equitable development:**
 - ▶ Equitable development plans are developed through community-led engagement to ensure the benefits of regeneration are shared amongst both new and existing residents. This would include enhancing existing social infrastructure and integrating the existing identity of Collyhurst into the newly regenerated area.
 - ▶ Long-term, collaborative relationships between residents, developers, local stakeholders and the research community should be developed in order to go beyond traditional forms of *'consultation'*.
 - ▶ Sustained engagement with existing residents is vital in order to understand their expectations for the new area and to ensure they feel involved. Greater Manchester has an established network of researchers and practitioners working on age friendly issues to support this process.
 - ▶ A priority for future planning should be to ensure that residents in areas undergoing regeneration experience the minimum disruption possible and are kept together with existing members of their community where desired.

2. There is keen interest from diverse groups (including residents, regeneration stakeholders and the wider public) to ensure that the Northern Gateway plans include an age-friendly dimension.

- ▶ Embedding age-friendly concepts into urban regeneration at such an early stage is unprecedented, and requires a creative, collaborative design approach to understand how local aspirations for later life can best be realised.
- ▶ The Northern Gateway should be designed to foster intergenerational inclusion and support people who wish to 'age in place'.
- ▶ Developers, policy-makers and service-providers must take into consideration the changing needs of older people both now and in the future, together with the communities in which they live.
- ▶ In order to ensure that Collyhurst is an age-friendly place, there is a need to engage with people in the period around mid-life (the 40s and 50s). This is often a time of major life transitions when people may make important decisions about their future housing and financial needs.

3. Future regeneration should offer mixed, affordable and age-appropriate housing to cater for the needs of existing and incoming communities.

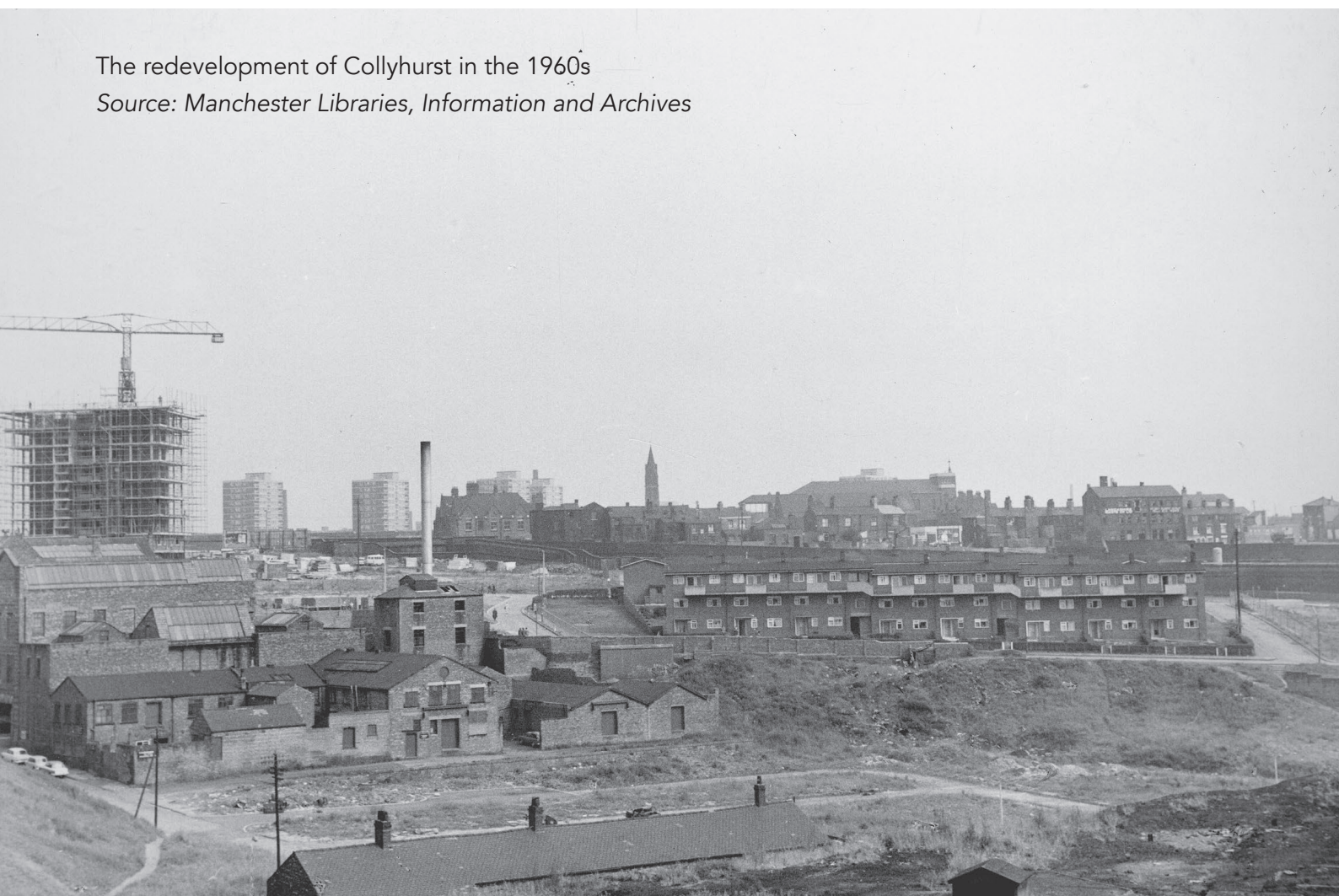
- ▶ Future urban regeneration should prevent the spatial segregation of different groups within the community, particularly the separation of residents by age group, tenure, and property size. For many older people, an age-friendly community is one that they share *with* people at *different life-stages*, not a type of specialist housing.
- ▶ Since many residents want to age in place, housing should be future-proofed, accessible and adaptable for the changes people face in later life.
- ▶ The social offer of the Northern Gateway should be more extensive. Manchester City Council and the Far East Consortium should explore ways of expanding the social rental offer further, and work with the local community to ensure that social spaces which promote interaction (e.g. libraries, cafés) are *built at the same time* as the physical regeneration of the neighbourhood .
- ▶ Developers should address the needs and aspirations of older people across all tenure groups, recognising emerging trends in housing moves in later life, including: people entering or remaining in the private sector in later life; the increased number of people experiencing divorce or separation; and the increased desirability of urban neighbourhoods for the new cohorts of older people.

1. Introduction

In 2018, Manchester announced the largest and most ambitious residential-led development in its history, with plans for up to 15,000 homes to be built over a 15-20 year period. The project, called the Northern Gateway, represents a major contribution to the City's strategy for residential growth. The Northern Gateway involves a collaboration with the Hong Kong-based private developers Far East Consortium (FEC) International Limited. The draft regeneration framework, published in 2018, describes the plans as having the potential to 'revitalise existing communities', providing a catalyst for the expansion of neighbourhoods to the north of the city⁶. The scale of the project is reflected in a comment from the *Manchester Evening News* which describes how 'a town the size of Lancaster' will be built onto the city centre⁷.

This report provides findings from a research project: '*Developing age-friendly communities in the Northern Gateway urban regeneration project: A co-research approach*' which brought together an interdisciplinary team of social scientists and architects. The researchers are based in the Manchester Urban Ageing Research Group (MUARG), at the University of Manchester. MUARG supports the promotion of age-friendly environments at a global, EU, national and local level. MUARG has a particular focus on understanding urban issues relating to social exclusion and the pressures facing older people in areas subject to economic decline. The project built on a long-standing collaboration between members of MUARG, Age-Friendly Manchester, and a range of organisations across Greater Manchester.

The redevelopment of Collyhurst in the 1960s
Source: Manchester Libraries, Information and Archives



This report investigates the potential for developing age-friendly communities in the Northern Gateway focusing on one of the neighbourhoods involved, Collyhurst. An age-friendly city, as defined by the World Health Organization, is a place in which people want to grow older in communities which support healthy ageing. Such communities enable older people to: 'age safely in a place that is right for them; be free from poverty; continue to develop personally; and to contribute to their communities while retaining autonomy and dignity'.⁸ Manchester City Council's commitment to age-friendly work has become known across the world, and is reflected in extensive collaborations, neighbourhood working, and a close relationship with the city's universities. Engagement with older people, and increasing their voice and influence, is central to the Manchester approach.

This report suggests that, by incorporating age-friendly approaches, the Northern Gateway has the potential to become a flagship urban regeneration project. Lessons from the Northern Gateway project could be replicated both across other cities in the UK, and equivalent schemes in other countries. The report:

1. Outlines a number of issues relating to age-friendly approaches and urban regeneration
2. Summarises key themes arising from the research
3. Suggests possible future directions for developing age-friendly approaches in the context of urban regeneration.

The proposed vision for Collyhurst set out in the Northern Gateway proposals
Source: Northern Gateway / Adriette Myburgh



2. Context

Greater Manchester: Age-Friendly Approaches

Since the mid-2000s, the need to create 'age friendly cities and communities', has emerged as a major concern for urban policy development. The World Health Organization has driven the age-friendly agenda through the development of the Global Network of Age-friendly Cities and Communities (GNAFCC). The GNAFCC has had a rapid increase in membership since its launch in 2010, reaching nearly 1000 cities and communities across the world by 2020.

Manchester was the first city in the UK to join the network, in 2010. The growth of the network has contributed to the development of age-friendly initiatives, addressing diverse issues such as green spaces, mobility, walkability, home adaptations and community services. Manchester has played an important role in contributing to the development of this agenda.

In 2018, Greater Manchester (GM) was recognised by the WHO as the UK's first age-friendly city-region, celebrating the different activities under development to make the region a better place in which to grow old. Age-Friendly work in GM is co-ordinated by the *Greater Manchester Ageing Hub* which brings together universities, the voluntary sector, and public and not-for-profit organisations, and the people who live and work in GM, to improve the lives of residents as they age.

Despite progress in developing age-friendly communities across GM, economic, health and social inequalities remain entrenched among the region's ageing population, resulting in:

- ▶ Widening health and income inequalities
- ▶ Substantial differences in healthy life expectancy: in some areas of GM it is below 50 as compared with average for England of 64
- ▶ Cuts to local government expenditure—including, 'social infrastructure' such as libraries and community centres – which limit opportunities for social participation.

This report explores how age-friendly approaches could be incorporated in the Northern Gateway urban regeneration project in order to address these challenges.



Urban Regeneration and its effects on older people

This section provides a brief overview of academic research relating to the impact of urban regeneration on older populations.

1. Older residents play important roles in their local communities and have a range of expertise and knowledge to contribute to discussions about the future of their neighbourhoods.

Research suggests that older people engage with their communities in a variety of ways⁹. Ageist stereotypes, dominant in popular culture, depict older residents as resistant to change. However, the evidence suggests that they are often keen to be involved in making decisions about their neighbourhood. Many will have lived in their locality for 30 or more years and have knowledge and insights regarding ways of improving daily life both for themselves and subsequent generations.

2. Urban regeneration may only be advantageous to younger, more affluent residents¹⁰.

Buffel and Phillipson examined the Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder programme (2002-2011) which was designed to reinvigorate housing markets in areas where demand for housing was weak. They found that older people faced difficulties when living in areas affected by large-scale housing demolition and a high rates of population turnover¹¹. Policy evaluations of the programme suggest a mixture of 'losers' and 'winners' in the communities affected. However, the striking feature of much urban policy evaluations is the absence of any consideration of the impact of urban regeneration on older

people. The lack of knowledge indicates the need both for further research and regular monitoring of the effects of developments such as the Northern Gateway.

3. Older people tend to be 'unseen' in much urban policy, research and institutional practices¹².

Research on the impact of urban renewal suggests that debates often focus around the needs of *incoming groups*, rather than *long-term* (often older) residents¹³. The paradox of neighbourhood participation for older people, who spend most of their time in their immediate neighbourhood, is that their needs are rarely considered in plans for urban development¹⁴. Plans to create age-friendly communities coincide with new pressures affecting urban life, illustrated by widening inequalities, isolation, and deprivation affecting a variety of age cohorts and social groups. To date, there has been limited academic research on the experiences of people ageing in areas affected by urban change. Further, there is little agreement of, or understanding about, what makes an age-friendly or supportive environment for the growing number of people who are ageing in place¹⁵.

4. Research on urban regeneration has drawn attention to its 'dark side', highlighting a range of negative social outcomes for lower-income groups¹⁶.

Urban regeneration may have negative consequences for certain groups. These may include: the displacement of existing residents¹⁷, social exclusion for those who remain¹⁸, exacerbation of gender inequalities¹⁹, reduction of affordable housing²⁰, and feelings of alienation and disempowerment²¹. In areas of urban regeneration, cultural displacement may

occur for existing residents. For example, for residents living in areas which are undergoing redevelopment, there is often a feeling that new amenities and services are not 'for them'. This is often most pronounced among Black Asian Minority Ethnic (BAME) groups²².

5. Urban regeneration alters both the social and the physical infrastructure of communities with implications for older people's social support and sense of inclusion.

Social infrastructure refers to the physical amenities and resources – libraries, community centres, cafés – which allow social interaction to develop within communities. Such infrastructure provides spaces and opportunities for people to have social interactions and build connections. Social infrastructure is important for older people in order to provide somewhere to meet others, reduce social isolation, and develop informal networks of care and support. It is also

about older people remaining visible in their communities and providing a sense of being seen and heard²³.

In a study of neighbourhood regeneration in South Korea, Cho and Kim point to the importance of existing older residents *being able to see* the improvements happening in their immediate area²⁴. They also recommend supporting residents to be involved in the repair and reuse of existing community buildings where possible. This allows older people to feel included in decision making processes in projects of urban regeneration.

Urban regeneration should support older people to be able to fulfil their everyday needs within the wider community²⁵. In other words, projects of urban regeneration must ensure that older residents are not excluded from any newly developed neighbourhood spaces and facilities.

Bury Market, an important element of the social infrastructure for many older people.
Source: Greater Manchester Combined Authority



Housing and the changing needs of the UK's ageing population

Contemporary research has identified a number of challenges generated by urban regeneration programmes. There is growing recognition that the housing offer in the UK is out of step with the needs and aspirations of older people. Innovative approaches are required in order to ensure that new housing is both attractive and within reach of those who wish to move, and that programmes are in place to support those who want to remain in their current homes²⁶. England's current housing stock is among the oldest in Europe, and only 7% of existing homes meet basic accessibility requirements²⁷. Whilst there has been some success in adopting higher accessibility and space standards for new housing through local planning processes, these measures only scratch the surface of a much broader housing crisis facing older people.

Despite calls for a more innovative approach from designers, developers and policy makers, there has been limited progress in improving housing options for older people, with government initiatives such as 'help-to-buy' and stamp duty relief primarily focusing on the needs of first-time buyers²⁷. Housing providers have been slow to adapt both to the changing expectations of older people and to broader societal and population changes, such as the growth of single-person households and smaller family sizes. There are now significant numbers of adult children (3.35m adults aged 20-35) who are living with their parents, which limits opportunities for older people to make proactive moves to suitable housing in mid-life²⁸. Equally, it is anticipated that the number

There are 493,000 non-decent homes in the North of England occupied by someone aged 60 and over

Northern Housing Consortium ⁴⁰

of older people living alone will expand rapidly over the next twenty years, with more people becoming divorced or remaining single as they grow older. In the case of GM, there is a projected 66% increase in the number of people living alone: from 97,000 in 2011 to 161,000 in 2036. In the case of men, one in three 75 and over will live alone by 2036. This group may be especially vulnerable to social isolation, arising in part from increasing rates of divorce and marital breakdown from mid-life onwards²⁹.

The lack of appropriate housing and community support can have a significant impact on people's physical and mental wellbeing. Poor quality housing is a significant contributor to increased demand for care services, increased likelihood of falls and premature admission into residential care facilities³⁰. Despite this, there are limited opportunities for many older people to respond proactively to their changing housing needs, as their choices are often limited to remaining in existing homes or being dislocated from their existing social networks by a move into specialist, age-restricted accommodation. 6 out of 10 older people who moved home reported a desire to move, suggesting a significant number of people are forced to relocate in crisis



Older Womens Cohousing in London - an innovative model, but one unlikely to reach a wider audience without better support from planners, developers and financial institutions.

Source: Pollard Edward Thomas Architects

situations such as health emergencies, divorce, loss of employment or death of a partner. For those requiring low levels of social support, the lack of suitable housing options and poor community services can often lead people to move into specialist housing with higher levels of care than they want or need³¹. There is concern that failure to improve housing options for older people could substantially increase social care and NHS costs, with inappropriate housing for the over 55s estimated to cost nearly £20bn by 2041³².

Based on current trends, housing insecurity is likely to be an increasing challenge for older people. There are currently 1.13m older people (50+) in the private rental sector, and the number of households with residents aged 65+ is projected to treble by 2046. To address the growing numbers of older people in

precarious tenancies, affected by ever increasing rents, there is a projected need for 630,000 new affordable homes by 2050³³. Whilst these increases seem far into the future, the effects of poor quality and unsecured housing are already felt by older people, and the slow rate of change in the UK housing stock makes this a pressing concern for current development programmes³⁴. It is important that the Northern Gateway should consider the changing needs of older people - both now and in the future as well as the communities in which they live.

Demographic change in an Age-Friendly Manchester

The number of older people in Manchester is set to rise substantially. Estimates suggest that by the year 2036, 14% of the total population living in Greater Manchester will be aged 75+. This is an increase of 75% from 2011, from 221,000 to 387,000³⁵.

Compared to the national average, a greater proportion of older people in Manchester are income deprived. The Income Deprivation Affecting Older People Index is the proportion of resident older people aged 60 or over who experience income deprivation. The definition of low income includes both those people that are out of work and those who are in work but who have low earnings, including those receiving Pension Credit³⁶. Manchester is rated 4th on the Income Affecting Older People Index and 36.3% of older people experience income deprivation³⁷. The characteristics of Manchester's older residents mean that they are more likely to place high demands on hospital emergency services, mental health services, and suffer from

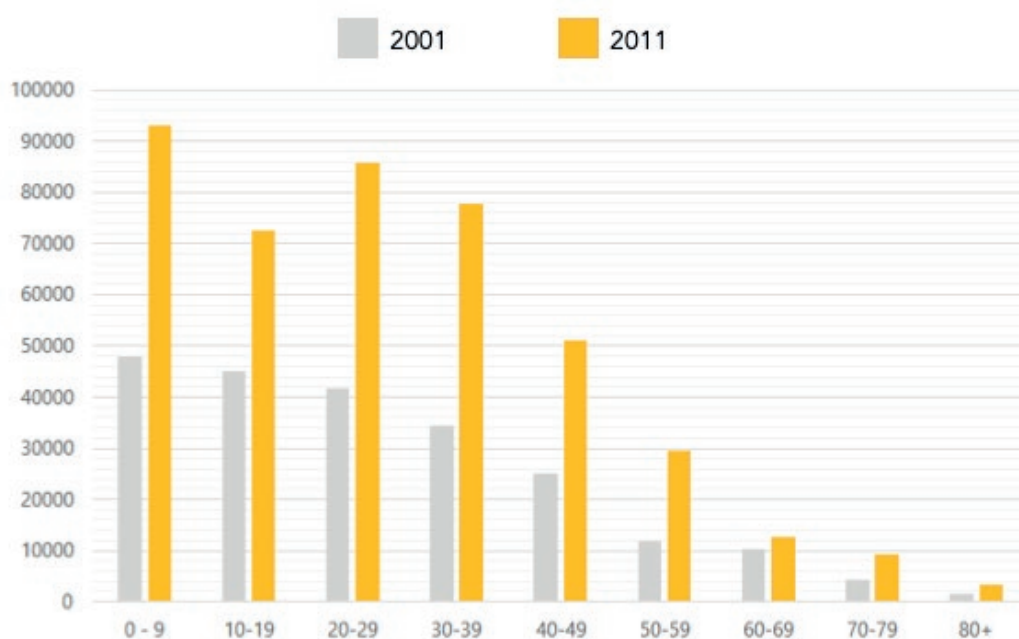
long term limiting illnesses at an earlier stage in their lives than seen nationally.

Manchester's population is becoming more diverse, notably in respect to ethnicity.


The minority ethnic population in Greater Manchester has grown over recent years and will continue to do so. In GM, the BAME population grew by 80% between 2001 and 2011: from 299,232 to 540,841. In Manchester, over one-third (33.4%) of the population are from BAME backgrounds, and 23% of Manchester's older population were born outside of the UK³⁸. Manchester is now more diverse than London in the sense that no one ethnic group exceeds 10% of the total population.

In view of these changing demographic trends in Manchester, tailoring urban regeneration strategies to different groups within the older population is essential. In particular, it is important to be attentive to the contrasting needs of different ethnic groups, those with particular physical/mental health needs, and those living in areas affected by high levels of economic and social inequality³⁹.

Number of BAME residents in Greater Manchester by age group



Manchester: a city of 'firsts'

- 
- 19th Century** Manchester gained city status in the 19th century during the Industrial Revolution. The area grew rapidly, becoming known as 'Cottonopolis', a hub of technological and social innovation, gaining city status on the back of its industrial success.
- 1950s** The city's fortunes changed and its industries closed down as the outsourcing of mass production went to countries such as India and China⁴¹.
- 1980s** Mass unemployment, poverty and social unrest spread across the city. Excluded by the Conservative central administration, the predominantly Labour City Council began to leverage public-private partnerships to re-build a 'post-industrial city'⁴².
- 1990s** During the New Labour period under Prime Minister Tony Blair, Manchester city council strengthened their relationships with the private sector, foregrounding a property-led strategy of urban regeneration in the city. Their aim was to harness the potential of private capital to be used for public good rather than solely for market gain⁴³.
- Manchester is now cited as a case of 'entrepreneurial urbanism' - a 'new urban politics', with the city viewed by government and private companies as a business in its own right⁴⁴.
- A revitalised inner-city housing market was accompanied by flourishing business quarters, booming retail and cafés, bars and restaurants as well as multiple ambitious projects to regenerate some of the city's most deprived neighbourhoods⁴⁵.
- 2000s** The 'success' of the city's rapid transformation has produced widespread recognition with other cities emulating the 'Manchester model' of regeneration.
- However, the post-industrial city transition narrative from 'a grimy, northern industrial city', to a 'hip, fashionable and dynamic place where people are excited to live'⁴⁶ does not account for the inequalities and divisions which remain and a growing unease about the future for some residents⁴⁷.
- 2016** Greater Manchester becomes the first English region to acquire devolved control over integrated health and social care budgets, under the broader devolution of powers popularly referred to as 'DevoManc'.

Background on Collyhurst

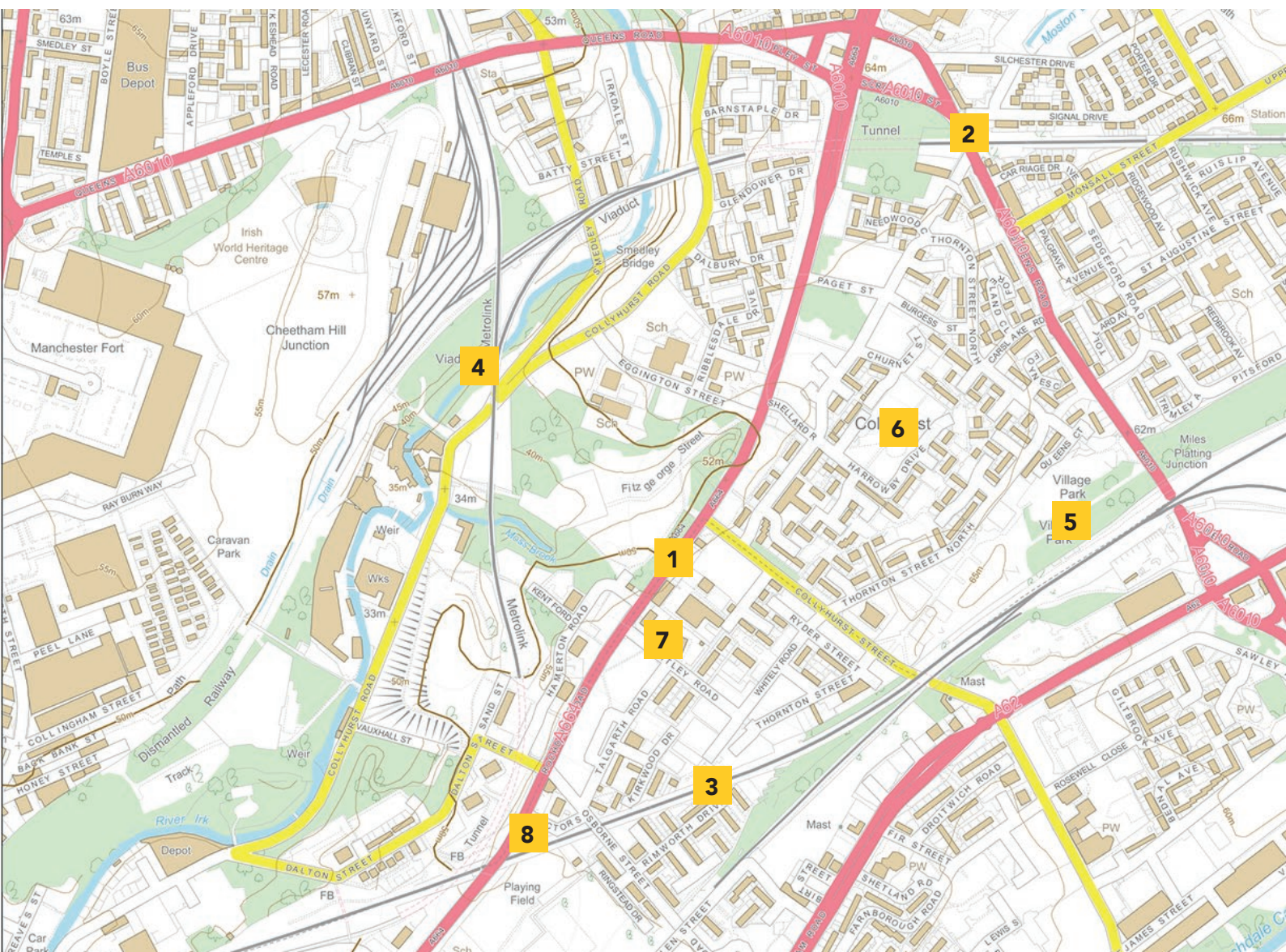
This research focuses on Collyhurst, one area included in the Northern Gateway plans, which will contain a mixture of housing and tenures with an emphasis on both social and affordable homes.

Collyhurst is an inner-city area of Manchester, located around one mile north-east of the city centre. The neighbourhood is bounded by major arterial roads to the west (Rochdale Road [1]) and east (Queens Road [2]) and a railway line to the south [3], although there is no train station in Collyhurst itself. Directly to the west of Collyhurst is the Irk Valley, a sizable but underutilised natural habitat which forms a steep

valley leading down to the River Irk [4]. There are two public green spaces in Collyhurst; Village Park [5] and Collyhurst Park [6]. There are few amenities in Collyhurst, but there is a medical centre and chemist on Whitley Road [7], and a health centre on Rochdale Road [8].

Collyhurst is located across two electoral wards; 'Miles Platting and Newton Heath' and 'Harpurhey'. It is also split between 2 parliamentary constituencies; 'Blackley and Broughton' and 'Manchester Central'.

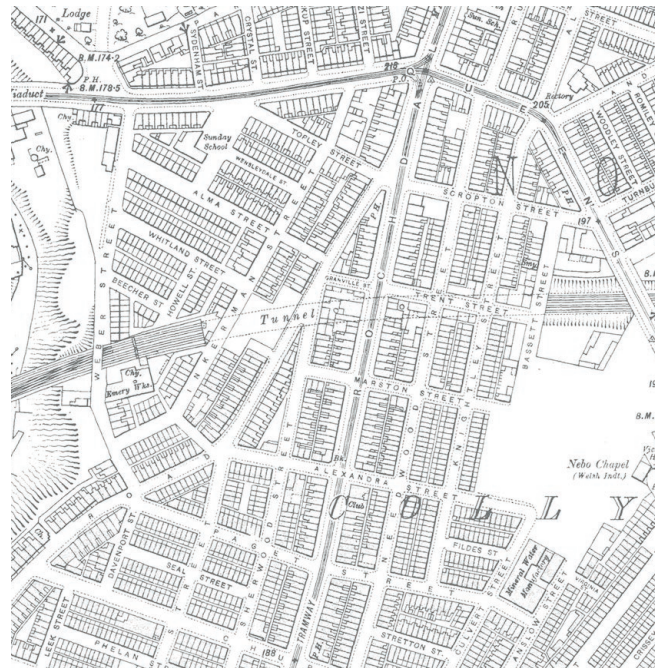
Map showing the location of key geographical features of Collyhurst
Background Map Source: EDINA Digimap (2018)



Existing social housing layout

Collyhurst was first developed as a residential community in the late 19th century, when terrace housing for Manchester's newly urbanised workforce was built on the former grounds of Collyhurst Hall. In the 1950s and 1960s, a major programme of urban renewal, including 'slum' clearance programmes and the rebuilding of new council housing estates, took place across Manchester. In Collyhurst, the privately owned Victorian terraced streets, flats and tenements were demolished, replaced by a new type of urban environment, with housing built and owned by Manchester City Council. The post-war estates in Collyhurst were designed according to what were termed 'Radburn' principles. These favoured communal, pedestrianised environments where houses turned their backs on streets and main roads, facing one another over open green spaces⁴⁸, resulting in the separation of pedestrian and traffic routes. The housing estates were regarded as pioneering when they were built, providing an improved standard of housing arranged in a way that created a sense of community and neighbourliness.

However, there were some problems arising from the nature of the Radburn design. In the case of Collyhurst, the houses were set back from the main Rochdale Road resulting in feelings of isolation amongst some residents⁴⁹. This was reinforced by the separate zones created for housing and for shops and amenities, with the latter in relatively short supply compared to neighbouring areas such as Harpurhey. The sense of isolation was reinforced by housing demolitions that have been carried out in the area. The clearance of maisonettes, as part of the *Decent Homes Programme*, was executed in a somewhat patchwork style, leaving vacant sites and empty land dotted around the neighbourhood.



Late 19th Century terrace housing in Collyhurst
Source: EDINA Historic Digimap (2010)



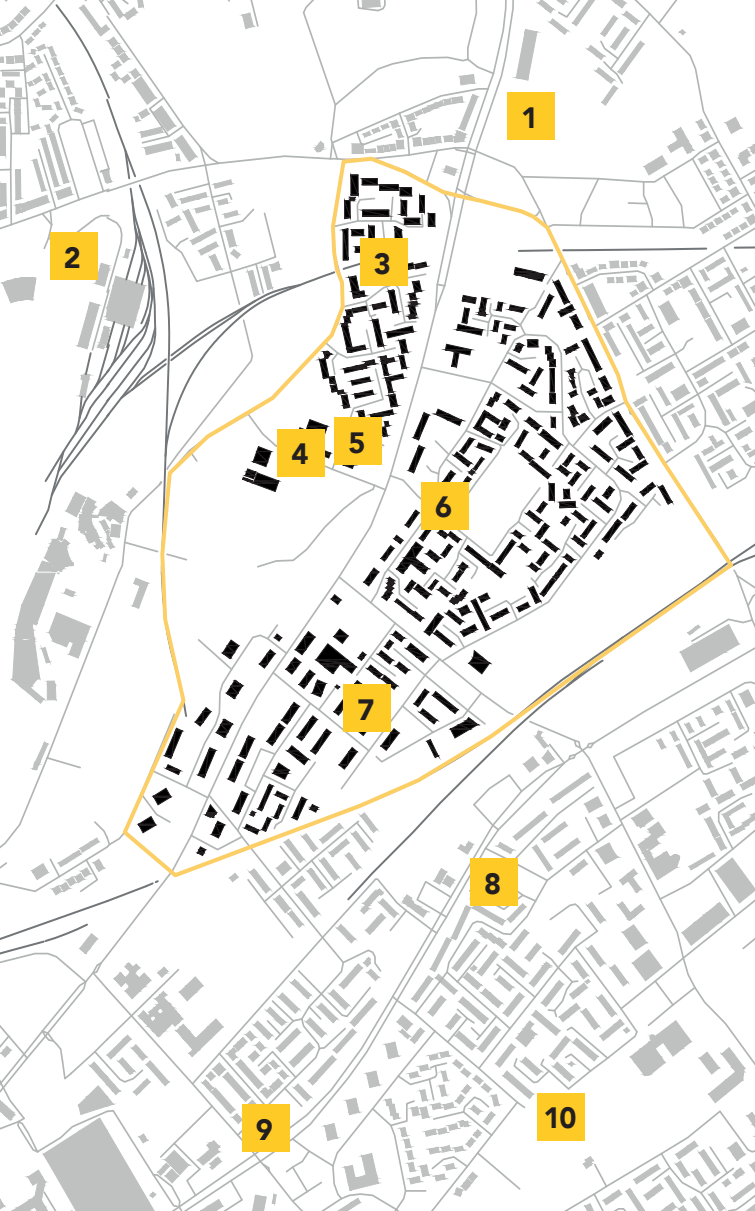
1960's Radburn housing and tower blocks
Source: Manchester Libraries, Information and Archives



Demolition of properties in Collyhurst between 2000 and 2018.

Yellow = properties demolished, Black = properties remaining

Background map source: Digimap OS VectorMap Local Scale 1:10000, 2018



Social Infrastructure

Waves of demolition and population decline have resulted in the loss of shops and social infrastructure in Collyhurst. Collyhurst has no significant retail outlets and limited public services, with residents having to travel to nearby Harpurhey or Cheetham to access key amenities such as libraries, leisure centres or to buy groceries or collect a prescription.

Map of key community amenities and social infrastructure in and around Collyhurst

1. Manchester Communication Academy
2. Irish World Heritage Centre
3. The Valley Public House
4. The Lalley Centre
5. Church of the Saviour
6. Collyhurst Village Store
7. YES Community Centre
8. St. Cuthbert's Church
9. St. George's Community Centre
10. Miles Platting Library

Walking distance/times to key amenities

Nearest Post Office	51 mins 1.6 miles
Harpurhey shops - Market / Asda / Lidl	38 mins 1.2 miles
Miles Platting Library (partial service)	29 mins 0.9 miles
North City Library (full service)	38 mins 1.2 miles
Newton Heath Job Centre Plus	57 mins 1.8 miles
North City Leisure Centre	38 mins 1.2 miles

Walking distances measured from the geographical centre of Collyhurst (Anslow Close)

Distances calculated using Google Maps.

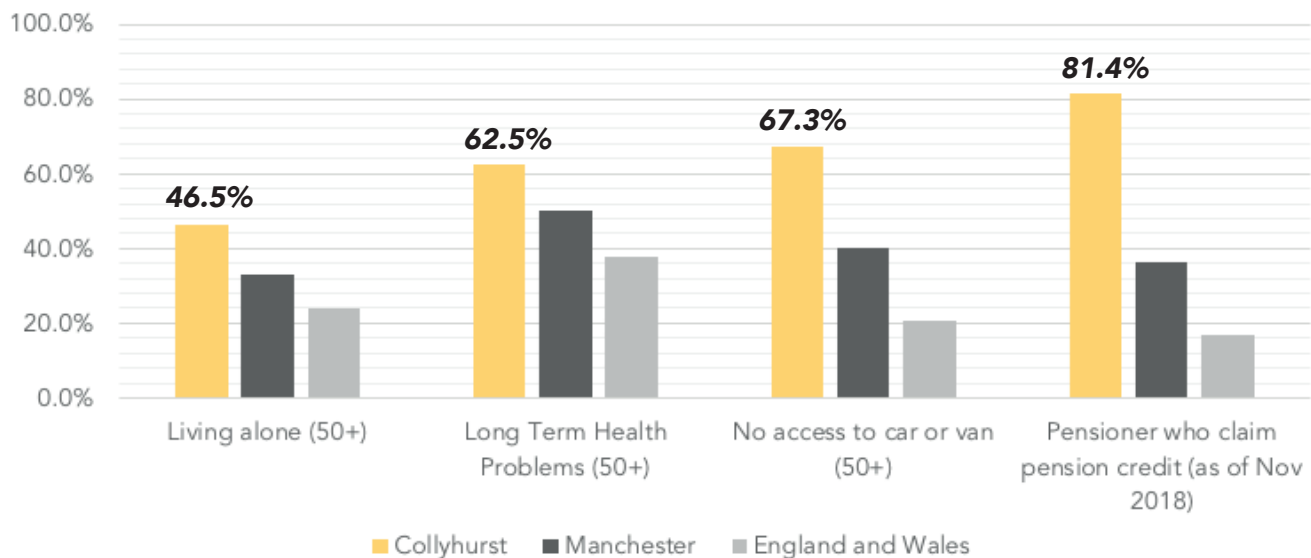
Assumes average walking speed amongst older people of 1.87mph ⁵⁰

Population

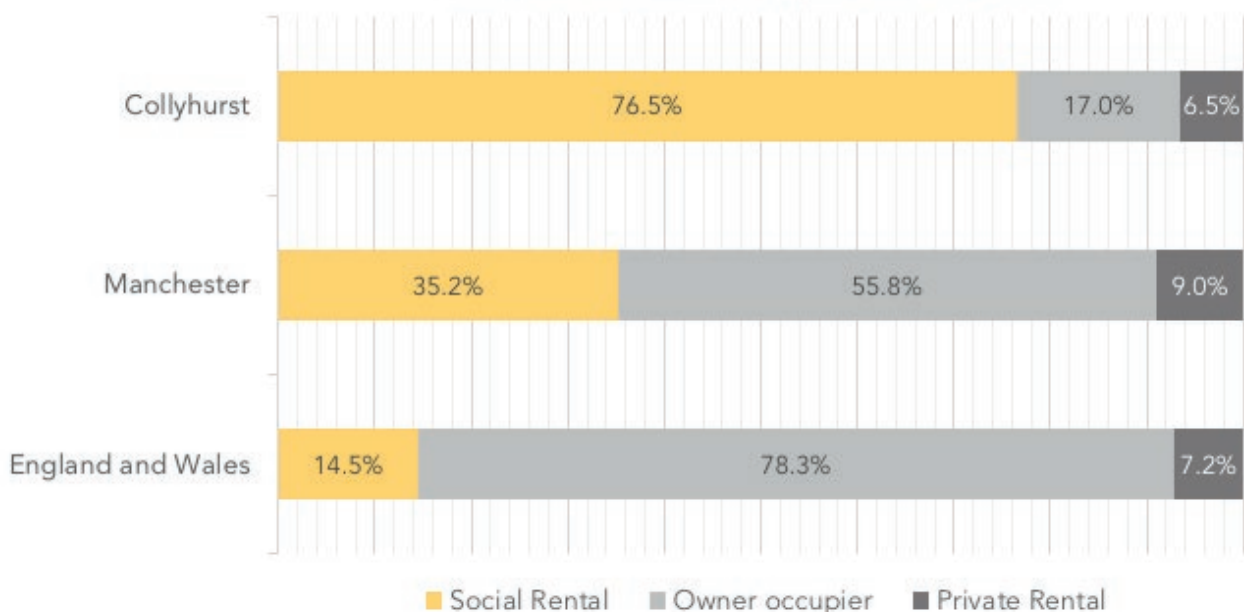
Collyhurst had a population of 2,890 in the 2011 census, of which 751 were aged 50 and over. The neighbourhood consists predominantly of socially rented properties – 1070 in total – with 77% of older people living in this type of accommodation. 89% of the older population is White British, which is just below the average for the city. Under one-third (29%) of older people (50+) are married or in a civil partnership, which is one of the lowest levels nationally; over half of residents are either divorced or widowed, and

just under half of those 50 plus living alone. Over half of older people in Collyhurst report that their day to day activities are limited by long-term health conditions. Two-thirds of older people do not have access to a car, despite limited amenities within the neighbourhood. A number of statistics identify income deprivation affecting older people in Collyhurst, with 81% of people of pensionable age claiming pension credits. In the 2019 Indices of Multiple Deprivation, Collyhurst is ranked in the lowest 1% nationally.

Indicators of health and economic inequalities in Collyhurst



Tenure of residents aged 50 and over



Northern Gateway

The Northern Gateway is a proposed regeneration programme in North Manchester, developed as a joint venture between Manchester City Council and the Far East Consortium.

The programme will provide around 15,000 homes over a 15-20 year period, with a mix of housing types and tenures to support diversity. The regeneration will also create high quality green and public spaces with improved social and community infrastructure to support social interaction and integration.

The Northern Gateway site stretches from New Cross and Red Bank on the city centre fringe to lower density suburban neighbourhoods

Collyhurst and Smedley Dip to the north. Due to the size of the proposed development and the significant lifestyle differences between those living in the city centre compared to suburban neighbourhoods, the Northern Gateway plan seeks to establish seven urban neighbourhoods. The Northern Gateway Strategic Development Framework (SRF) proposed that:

“Development in each neighbourhood is planned to be sensitive to the area’s existing characteristics, and will have its own distinct character and a strong sense of place⁵¹.”

The existing neighbourhood of Collyhurst is subdivided into two districts in the Northern Gateway SRF: Collyhurst Village, and South Collyhurst.

Aerial view of the Northern Gateway boundary. Source: Northern Gateway

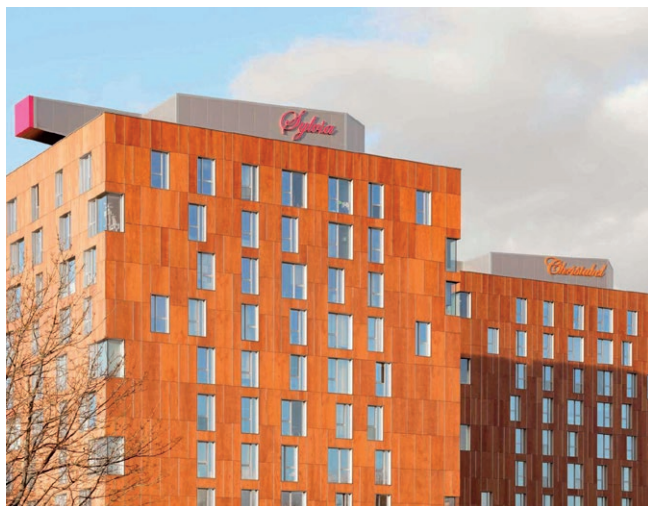


Regeneration Timeline



Local press announce planned improvements
to housing in Collyhurst

Source: Manchester Evening News



Three Sisters apartment blocks

Source: Urban Splash

Collyhurst is a site which has been reshaped by a number of types of urban change: de-industrialisation, rapid population decline, and housing demolition. Various regeneration plans have been proposed for Collyhurst but many have not come to fruition, which are outlined below:

2006

A Private Finance Initiative (PFI) was announced for Collyhurst, as part of North Manchester's wider regeneration plans.

The Collyhurst Local Plan outlined a 10-15 year major redevelopment programme for the area, providing around 1300 new homes and some new amenities.

2008

The PFI was reviewed and funds were increased from £160m to £252m, due to poor housing market conditions and falling land values.

2008

Property developer Urban Splash converted three 1960s tower blocks in Collyhurst and renamed them Emmeline, Christabel and Sylvia after the Pankhurst sisters and their mother. The flats were for private sale and were involved in the First Time Buyers Initiative⁵². Grey concrete panels were replaced with bright wooden cladding and new floor to ceiling windows replaced the former small balconies⁵³.

2010

Following a review by central government, funding for Collyhurst's PFI was scrapped and the redevelopment was cancelled.



Manchester Communication Academy
Source: Nortek Group



Eastford Square in Collyhurst, which is now derelict and awaiting demolition
Source: Flickr / Raver_Mikey

2010

As part of a Local Authority city-wide decision to establish six new academies, The Manchester Communications Academy (MCA) opened in September 2010, with British Telecom (BT) being its lead sponsor. The building was constructed by Lang O'Rourke at a cost of £32m. MCA has made a long-term commitment to the area, signing a 125-year lease on the building.

2011

As part of the Decent Homes Programme, run by the Department of Communities and Local Government, Manchester City Council (MCC) secured £29m which brought about demolition and improvement works to be carried out in Collyhurst.

Plans included the demolition of 13 maisonette blocks, 190 households to be relocated, as well as refurbishing 928 homes in line with the Decent Homes Standard for public housing introduced by the UK government. It was underpinned the Decent Homes Programme which aimed to provide a minimum standard of housing conditions for social housing tenants.

2011

MCC along with Network Rail (a key landowner in the area) produced a development framework draft combining Collyhurst with the Lower Irk Valley.

The draft outlined a 10-15 year plan, providing a mixture of housing tenures, community facilities and open green spaces⁵⁴.



Collyhurst towers prior to renovation
Source: Flickr / Raver_Mikey



Collyhurst towers after renovation
Source: Rockwool Group

2012

John Laing were chosen as a private sector partner to work alongside the council to deliver the Collyhurst and Lower Irk Valley regeneration plan⁵⁵.

2013

John Laing cancelled its application to be private sector partner in the regeneration initiative⁵⁶. As a result, the Collyhurst and Lower Irk Valley regeneration was scrapped.

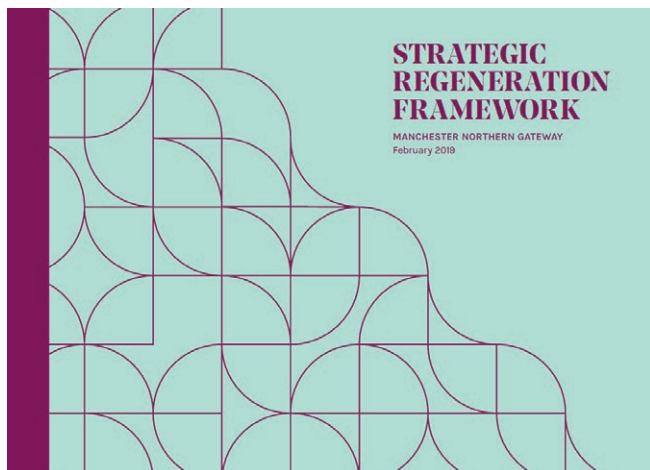
MCC decided to separate the redevelopment of the Lower Irk Valley from Collyhurst as a redevelopment opportunity⁵⁷.

2014

The Collyhurst Spatial Masterplan was produced, outlining a broad vision for the long term redevelopment of the area, including further remodelling of parts of the neighbourhood, new mixed tenure housing, new road layouts and a community hub⁵⁸.

2017

The Far East Consortium International Limited was chosen as the investment and delivery partner for the Northern Gateway, to work with MCC on a Joint Venture (JV) basis⁵⁹. The remodelling and regeneration of Collyhurst was identified as a priority⁶⁰.



Front cover of the Northern Gateway Strategic Regeneration Framework
Source: Northern Gateway



Indicative illustration of Collyhurst in Northern Gateway Strategic Regeneration Framework
Source: Northern Gateway / Adriette Myburgh

2018

MCC and FEC published a Strategic Regeneration Framework (SRF) outlining development plans for the Northern Gateway.

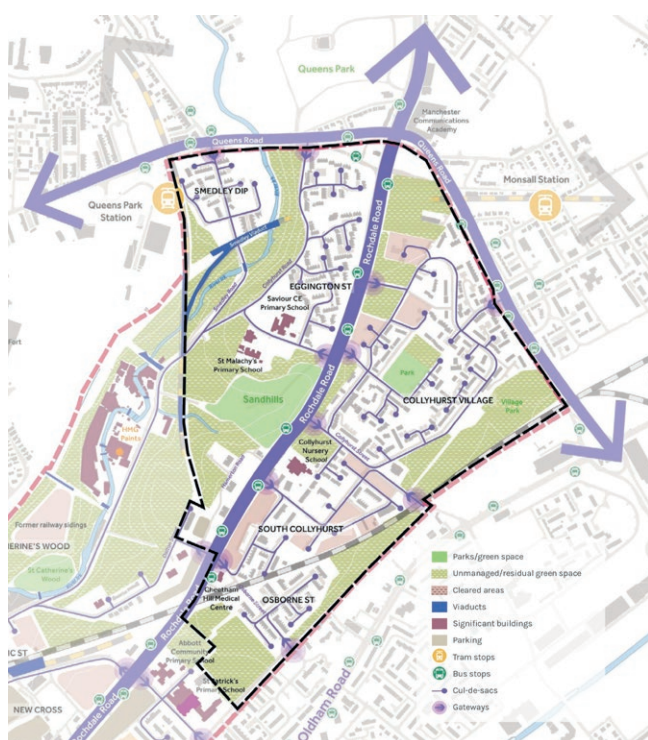
"The Northern Gateway represents a holistic approach to redevelopment, aiming to deliver a series of vibrant, sustainable and integrated residential neighbourhoods⁶¹."

Collyhurst Village and South Collyhurst will be residential-led neighbourhoods, providing a medium to higher density and mixed housing offer, and family housing⁶². Retail and service hubs, neighbourhood squares, new parks, and 'green links' via the River Irk will help connectivity and encourage interaction between Collyhurst Village and South Collyhurst, as well as other surrounding areas⁶³.

There is a strong emphasis on providing affordable and social housing units throughout the Collyhurst neighbourhoods, with an opportunity to deliver these as part of the initial phases of development⁶⁴.



Indicative illustration of a new park in the Northern Gateway SRF
Source: Northern Gateway / Adriette Myburgh



Spatial analysis from the Northern Gateway SRF
Source: Northern Gateway

2018

An award of £10.25m was announced by central government to part fund an early phase of new homes for social rent in Collyhurst⁶⁵. This award was part of a wider £68m housing deal being offered to MCC based on specific housing targets for Manchester in the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework.

2019

The final version of the SRF was approved by the MCC executive, after public consultation and revisions.

A strategy for Phase 1 of development in the Northern Gateway was released.

Included in this first phase is the delivery of 530 new homes as part of a mixed scheme in the Collyhurst neighbourhoods, of which up to 130 are proposed to be built for social rent (at least 20% therefore will be affordable)⁶⁶.

Remodelling and demolition of existing properties is proposed. Council owned homes lost through demolition will be replaced on a one for one basis, and existing residents will have re-housing priority⁶⁷. Funding for the provision of these social rent and affordable homes will depend on national government priorities.

2019

A £68m support package to support brownfield development in Manchester was withdrawn after disagreements between central government and the Greater Manchester Combined Authority about housing targets. The withdrawn grant included £10.25m to fund social rent and affordable homes in Collyhurst⁶⁸. The implications of this loss of funding are unknown at the time of publication.

3. Research Methods

A literature review on urban regeneration and age-friendly communities was conducted, exploring current academic debates and policy debates as well as a documentary/visual analysis of the Northern Gateway regeneration plans.

A total of 22 interviews were conducted involving 6 community workers, 4 regeneration stakeholders and 12 residents.

Two focus groups were undertaken with residents living in Collyhurst. 6 people in sheltered housing for over 60s and 5 older residents who live in the same high-rise block, all

Photos from the 'Developing Age-Friendly Cities' workshop, June 2019
Source: University of Manchester



were over 50. The University of Manchester gave ethical approval for the research. All participants were given a *Participant Information Sheet*, providing details about the ethical guidelines adhered to in this project and signed a *consent form*. The interviews were semi-structured, meaning that a core set of questions were asked, but interviewees could discuss issues which were important to them. They included:

- ▶ How would you describe the sense of community in Collyhurst?
- ▶ How do you think the advantages and challenges of living in Collyhurst differ between different age groups?
- ▶ What do you think the priorities for the Northern Gateway should be?
- ▶ Do you anticipate growing older in Collyhurst and living here in the future?
- ▶ If you would like to stay in the area, what would best help support this?
- ▶ How do you think the needs of different age groups should be catered for in Collyhurst in the future?

The interviews lasted between 20 minutes and 1 hour and were recorded and then transcribed. The aim was to speak to a broad range of people living and working in Collyhurst. The research team spent time in informal sites in Collyhurst, including a community centre, food bank, sheltered housing and people's homes. In doing so, the research team were able to engage with a wide range of people and residents in Collyhurst. All of the comments from the focus groups and interviews have been anonymised.

A network of researchers and practitioners working on urban regeneration issues in Greater Manchester was developed. This involved regular meetings to discuss the research with FEC, MCC and Northwards Housing. The Age-Friendly Older People's Board invited the research team and one of the project's partners Matt Doran from the council's Strategic Development Team, to discuss plans for the Northern Gateway. The Board commented favourably on the research collaboration and invited the team back to discuss the findings arising from the research.

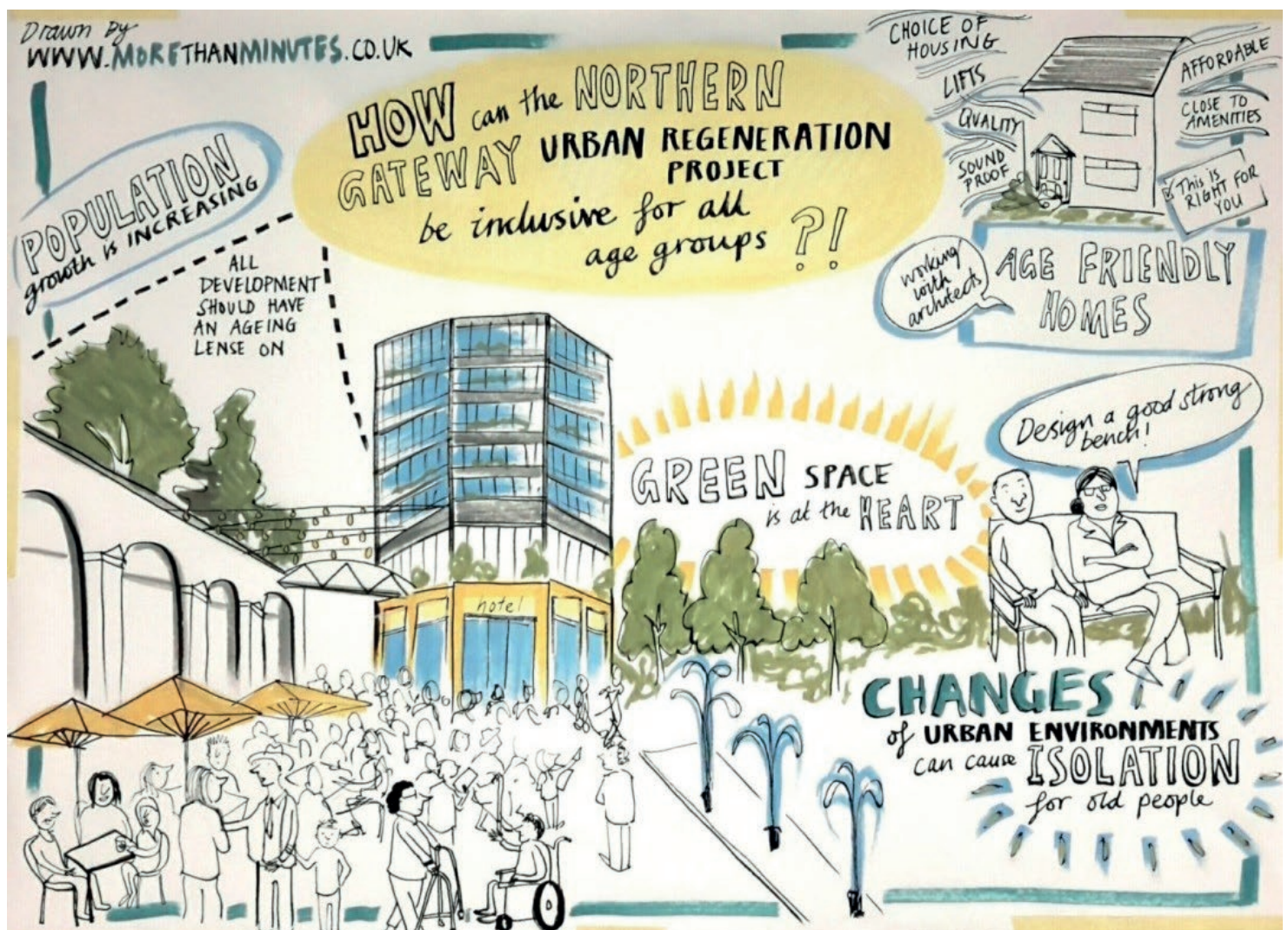
A workshop on urban regeneration and age-friendly communities was organised, as part of an event 'Developing age-friendly cities: Turning urban research into practice' on June 24th 2019.

Members of the project team presented findings from the research on a panel, alongside Dave Thorley (Age-Friendly Manchester) and Matt Doran (Manchester City Council). Students from Manchester School of Architecture exhibited their work on age-friendly approaches in the Northern Gateway.

A film was created about the event and a report summarizing the discussions was published on the Manchester University website in order to draw wider attention to the project:

www.manchester.ac.uk/discover/news/manchester-urban-ageing-research-group-releases-report-on-developing-age-friendly-cities/.

Visual minutes of the 'Developing Age-Friendly Cities' workshop, June 2019
Source: University of Manchester / MoreThanMinutes.co.uk



4. Findings

This section summarises five overarching themes which emerged from the interviews and focus groups:

1. Collyhurst is described as a 'forgotten place'

Collyhurst was an industrial neighbourhood in Manchester, home to factories and communities of workers including St George's Colliery, a chemical works on Collyhurst Clough, brick-making works, a paper mill, a rope works and dye factories. Since the 1970s, the neighbourhood has experienced the closure of industry, depopulation and entrenched economic and social disadvantage. Slum clearances and demolitions resulted in the fragmentation of social ties and rising levels of unemployment.

"Collyhurst became a rough place with high levels of anti-social behaviour as a result of 'decades of neglect'"

(local business owner, interview)

A recurring theme which emerged in many of the discussions with residents was that Collyhurst

had become a 'forgotten area' where 'nothing ever gets done'. For example, litter was cited as a problem in public spaces, and residents felt that there had been insufficient investment in local amenities. Comparisons were made to other areas which had received regeneration funding.

This area doesn't have as much attention as others. People living in Collyhurst have been ignored'

(resident, 50s, focus group)

In one of the focus groups, residents described how they felt 'forgotten' as many people in Manchester did not know where Collyhurst was, as the majority of housing is not visible from the main road.

2. The legacy of mistrust

Various regeneration plans have been proposed for Collyhurst over the last fifteen years but have not come to fruition, creating mistrust among some residents.

"The existing community is 'jaded' and there is a low trust base"

(regeneration stakeholder, interview)

At the same time, residents have high aspirations for the future redevelopment of the area. They were concerned that like the failed promises of the past, the Northern Gateway would never be realised. One local resident described:

"Regeneration plans have failed so many times and stalled so many times that they [residents] just no longer believe the council. They'd been consulted to death. They didn't feel listened to"

(resident, 50s, interview)

Similarly, an interviewee who ran a community centre commented:

"I've worked in really tough areas and this is one of the toughest I've ever worked because people don't trust. You know, you're another suit, you're someone coming to tell us something that isn't going to happen. And we can understand why because they've been let down so many times."

(Community centre volunteer, interview)

3. Strong sense of local identity and community, desire to age in place

Despite population loss and changes to social ties, all of the residents who we spoke to wanted to stay living in Collyhurst and aspired to age in place. A strong sense of local identity and belonging was evident, which had become more resilient as residents faced numerous upheavals (such as demolition and displacement) resulting in the creation of strong bonds.

"There is a strong sense of community in Collyhurst. Today's community is actually closer than it has been in the past, because we've lived there that long everybody knows everybody else, there is only the odd ones that moved in afterwards"

(resident, 70s, interview).

Another resident spoke fondly of the extensive links she had in her neighbourhood, which had developed over her fifty years living in the area:

"I get very angry when I hear people saying about these areas being deprived. They want to come and live here."

(resident, 70s, interview).

In one of the focus groups, one resident described how what made Collyhurst a supportive place to live was the shared sense of experience.

"Well we're all the same type of person really, we're all just down to earth, working people, we've all had educations but all come from more or less the same stock"

(resident, 50s, focus group).

There were concerns about how incoming residents moving to the area as a result of the Northern Gateway, would be able to integrate with the existing community due to perceived social and cultural differences. Some interviewees were concerned about different attitudes between generations:

"Amongst what I call my generation, the 55 pluses, there's still a strong working-class ethic, proud of their homes, proud of their communities, you get involved. And then there's a younger generation, increasingly younger, that is benefit dependent, have been completely forgotten by the education system, and are raising families that generation by generation become more dependent, and I think that's quite a negative thing"

(resident, 50s, interview).

4. Future regeneration should offer mixed, affordable and age appropriate housing

The majority of the people we interviewed were keen for redevelopment to take place, in some form. Change was seen as inevitable and for the most part, welcome. However, there were concerns about whether the type of regeneration proposed would result in the exclusion of the existing community.

One resident and local activist we interviewed was adamant that the newly regenerated area should focus on creating a safe environment for existing 'vulnerable' residents, such as those who were unemployed or living with disabilities. He recognised the advantages of developing a new 'mixed economy' but also stressed the importance of catering for older as well as younger populations. He was particularly concerned about the rising cost of housing, pricing out existing residents, as well as about the impact of gentrification spreading out from the city centre.

"I mean Manchester just moved up to the 50th most expensive city in the world to live. I think it jumped 7 places in one year...And I think that might happen to Collyhurst"

(resident, 50s, interview) ⁶⁹.

Residents in their twenties expressed a strong desire for more 'family homes' to be built with gardens but also felt that there should be one-bedroom flats to cater for single people. Existing residents were keen for suitable housing to be built, so their families could continue to live in the area. If communities are to be protected, improved housing, alongside better services and facilities, should benefit the people who are living on an estate prior to its regeneration⁷⁰.

Residents and local community groups expressed frustration with the limited number of social houses proposed for the Northern Gateway. They felt that plans for new housing should ensure that Collyhurst remains a neighbourhood which is home to people on low-incomes. Regarding new developments, a view was expressed that future housing should be built to a high standard. Mention was made of the lack of trust and concern among some social housing tenants after the Grenfell Fire disaster. One interviewee reported that residents in his tower block were concerned about the quality of cladding, as well as poor workmanship with recent kitchen and bathroom installations.

5. Need for more local amenities and social spaces

The research found that the Northern Gateway should prioritise the needs of existing residents to be able to access services and amenities in the new Collyhurst.

Emphasis was placed, by one community development worker, on the need for the new area to be a proper 'community', one which can provide:

"...a friendly space, that people can live in and enjoy and they've got a good environment, things that they can access, that they know there are shops and stuff like that and community venue that they can access if they need support"

(resident, 50s, interview).

Residents stressed that the newly regenerated area should include more social spaces such as a community centre, 'a place for entertainment', and somewhere where older and younger people could gather, like a social club. For example, the provision of the garden/patio area outside one of the housing blocks had made a big difference in increasing the opportunities to socialise, particularly for those who lived on their own. Older residents recognised that a lot of the time children might be bored and not have activities in the area to keep them entertained. They suggested community centres for the older kids were needed and wanted places where 'everyone could come together'.

A mother in her thirties described how the community centre she attended - which also housed a food bank - had provided a vital life-line for her to seek out informal support and company.

"...it gets to a point where something that they can do that doesn't include being a mum and just be me. I mean, coming here and having a natter and I can just be me. But it's just once a week, whereas I'd like it if there was something I could do, like a group more often. Even something like girls could go and have their nails done or just half an hour a week"

(resident, 30s, interview).

The overriding opinion of local residents was that local amenities were insufficient, including shops, doctors, opticians, chemists, as well as informal places for people to meet up were insufficient. Residents who participated in the focus groups also spoke about inadequate public and community transport links, with many having to rely on taxis. Older residents reminisced about when Collyhurst had local shops and discussed the need for new facilities to be affordable.

Tower blocks on Rochdale Road circa 1970.
Source: *Manchester Libraries, Information and Archives*



5. Conclusion and recommendations

- 1. The Northern Gateway should seek to be an exemplar of equitable development, with a focus on producing social benefits that are shared between long-term residents and newcomers.**

- ▶ This research has shown an aspiration, shared by local people and professionals, for the Northern Gateway programme to support socially-equitable forms of urban development.
- ▶ An equitable development plan should be developed through community-engagement to ensure the benefits of regeneration are shared amongst both new and existing residents.
- ▶ Whilst improving housing, services and amenities for existing residents of Collyhurst are implied in the Northern Gateway plans, an equitable development programme provides an approach which makes these social goals explicit, thus creating an accountable, collaborative platform, able to overcome the legacy of mistrust felt by community members.
- ▶ The research shows the social offer of the Northern Gateway should be more extensive. Manchester City Council should explore ways of expanding the social rental offer further across the Northern Gateway, and work with the local community to ensure that social spaces which promote interaction are included in any plans for the area. Providing opportunities for participation, engagement and visibility for older people is a key feature of age-friendly urban development⁷¹.
- ▶ Manchester City Council's ambition to create the Northern Gateway as an age-friendly urban regeneration project is unique. Lessons from this site could be replicated across other cities undergoing redevelopment in the UK and abroad.
- ▶ For further ideas about how these principles have been developed in practice, see case studies 1,3 and 5.

2. New ways of working with residents need to be adopted, which go beyond existing forms of consultation and include more open-ended, sustained forms of collaboration.

- ▶ Greater Manchester has an established network of researchers and practitioners working on age friendly issues to support this process. Further links have been formed through this research project.
- ▶ Older people are keen to be involved in future decision making on the Northern Gateway. 'Reconciling the different interests, goals and priorities of these stakeholders' will be a key issue in the next stage of discussions⁷².

"It's about being honest and genuine with people and not promising things that you can't deliver..... treat people with respect because they'll think of things that you can't think of every time. One possibility could be to establish a client group to 'bounce ideas off'"

(community development worker, interview)

- ▶ Sustained engagement with existing residents is vital in order to understand their expectations for the new area and to ensure they feel involved. Traditional styles of consultation are deemed to be rather limited. More open styles of discussion should be supported in order to encourage meaningful dialogue.
- ▶ One method to engage with residents could be the adoption of a co-research approach, which would bring together a team of older people with architects and regeneration planners to make suggestions for how the Northern Gateway could integrate 'age friendly homes and public spaces' (such as parks, shopping and leisure facilities). Involving older residents as co-researchers in exploring the age-friendliness of their neighbourhood represents a possible method to engage older residents and mobilise their 'expertise, skills and knowledge' in developing age-friendly initiatives.
- ▶ The Northern Gateway plan offers a long-term vision, which needs to be protected so it can be fully realised. It is difficult to anticipate future economic conditions and how they will affect the Northern Gateway plans. Including residents as co-researchers/co-designers will ensure that people can age in place and retain vital social links.
- ▶ For further ideas about how these principles have been developed in practice, see case studies 2, 6, 7 and 8.

3. The Northern Gateway should be designed to cater for the needs of different generations in order to support intergenerational inclusion and support people to age in place.

- ▶ The scale of the Northern Gateway plans are highly ambitious (building 15,000 homes over a 15-20 year period). The Regeneration Framework states that the Northern Gateway is not just a question of creating new homes but the 'creation of place'⁷³.

"It's not just about 'providing boxes for people to sleep in' but 'providing places for people to lay roots in. It's about urban design and liveability as well"

(regeneration stakeholder, interview)

- ▶ In order to achieve these aims, the newly regenerated area should cater for all generations and be inclusive for existing communities as well as incoming residents. A priority for future regeneration should be to ensure that residents in areas undergoing regeneration experience the minimum disruption possible and are kept together with existing members of their community⁷⁴.
- ▶ The 'public' are 'multiple and differentiated' and have different demands on spaces giving it a variety of meanings⁷⁵. As a result, the Northern Gateway plans need to cater for different generations.
- ▶ With cuts to public spending, a shared spatial vision is required to stimulate change which brings together transport systems, care services and housing⁷⁶. Therefore, age-friendly approaches must be combined with broader social goals for the area, which address intergenerational inclusion.
- ▶ For further ideas about how these principles have been developed in practice, see case studies 1, 3 and 4.

4. Developers, policy-makers and service-providers must take into consideration the changing needs of older people both now and in the future, together with their families and the communities in which they live.

- ▶ In order to ensure that Collyhurst is an age-friendly place, there is a need to engage with people in the period around mid-life (the 40s and 50s). This is often a time of major economic social transitions when people may make important decisions about their future housing and financial needs.
- ▶ Successful community engagement needs to happen early enough and be both clear and realistic about which elements can be informed by the consultation.
- ▶ Placing older people's experiences at the heart of the agenda is essential, in order to give older people a voice so they can be involved in making decisions about future homes and neighbourhoods in the city⁷⁷.
- ▶ For further ideas about how these principles have been developed in practice, see case studies 1, 7 and 8.

Proposed public square in the Northern Gateway Strategic Regeneration Framework

Image source: Northern Gateway / Adriette Myburgh



5. Future regeneration should offer mixed, affordable and age-appropriate housing to cater for the needs of existing and incoming communities.

- ▶ This research has found that there is keen interest from diverse groups (including residents, regeneration stakeholders and the wider public) to ensure that the Northern Gateway plans include an age-friendly dimension. Embedding age-friendly concepts into urban regeneration at such an early stage is unprecedented, and requires a creative, collaborative design approach to understand how local aspirations for later life can best be realised.
- ▶ The ongoing development of local plans should seek to prevent the spatial segregation of different groups within the community, particularly the separation of residents by age group, tenure, and property size. For many older people, an age-friendly community is one that they share with people at different life-stages, not a type of specialist housing. Since many residents want to age in place, housing should be future-proofed for future needs so that it is accessible and adaptable.
- ▶ Developers should be encouraged to explore and address the needs and aspirations of older people across tenures, recognising emerging trends in the housing movements of older people. These include older people entering or remaining in the private sector in later life, the increased number of older people experiencing divorce or separation in later life, and the increased desirability of urban neighbourhoods for the emerging cohort of older people.
- ▶ The changing aspirations of current and future cohorts of older people require us to explore new forms of housing and new ways of providing affordable dwellings.
- ▶ There is a proud social history in Collyhurst, which should be incorporated in the identity of the new area, for example, through public art. Understanding the needs and aspirations of existing residents is essential and incorporating the 'layers of history' (described in community stakeholder interview) in the regeneration plans would ensure existing residents felt represented.
- ▶ In order to ensure that residents are integrated into the new area, the Northern Gateway should harness the talents of local residents. For example, the skills of local residents should be recognised and incorporated in voluntary and paid work in the new community.
- ▶ In order to remain a leading city on age-friendly issues, Manchester City Council should work closely with the Far East Consortium to develop a new style of urban regeneration, which places older people's interests at the centre of the decision-making process. For example, through supporting existing social infrastructure and integrating the existing identity of the area into the new design
- ▶ For further ideas about how these principles have been developed in practice, see case studies 6,7 and 8.

Case study 1 : Future Homes Alliance, Newcastle

The Future Homes Alliance programme aims to deliver affordable housing that addresses issues of demographic change (ageing) and sustainable housing in Newcastle⁷⁸. The project was developed through a 'quadruple helix' partnership - a collaboration between academia, industry, local/regional government and third sector/community groups. The consortium, initiated by a series of workshops funded by the Newcastle University Institute for Ageing, included Newcastle City Council, Ryder Architects, Karbon Homes, Zero Carbon Futures and the Newcastle Elders Council. The aim of the project was to challenge norms and standards within the development process, in which there is often little interaction between disciplines, hindering the potential for innovation and perpetuating siloed ways of working.

The Future Homes project sought to bridge these gaps between disciplines by creating opportunities to work together on a live demonstrator project. The project undertook a programme of public conversations and citizen-led co-design workshops to define the vision for a new residential development that challenged some of the current ways of working in the housing sector. The consortium has since established themselves as a Community Interest Company and has received a £1.1m grant from Homes England to support their first housing demonstrator, a 66 dwelling scheme in the city centre, which is due to begin on-site in mid 2020.

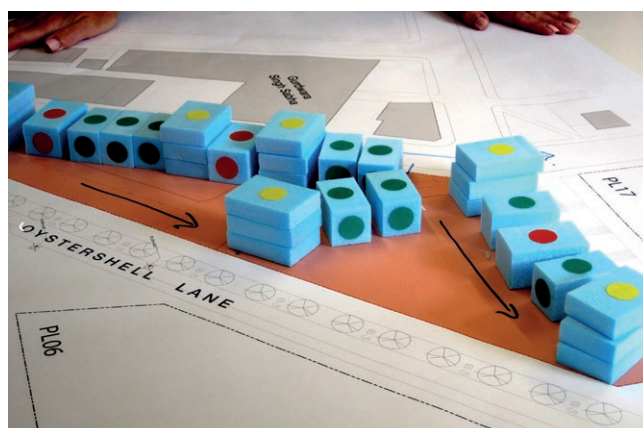
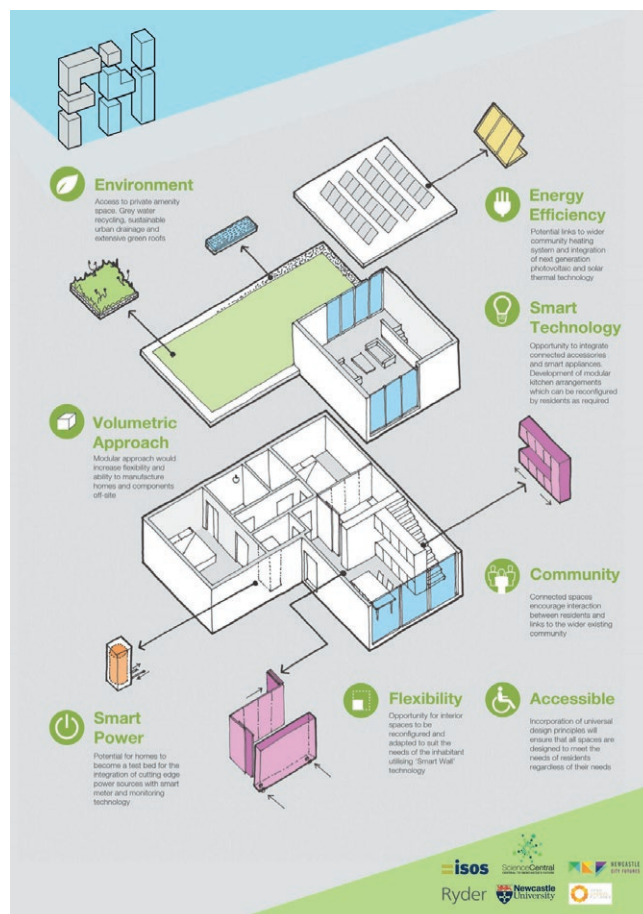


Image source: Future Homes Alliance

Case Study 2: Maison BILOBA Huis, Brussels

Maison BILOBA Huis is a cohousing community, social resource and daycare centre in the Schaerbeek district of Brussels. The western side of Schaerbeek has a large BAME population, primarily Turkish and Moroccan migrants, and high levels of economic deprivation. In 2007, three charities came together to develop a social programme for older migrants. They set up a social enterprise called E.MM.A to develop community resources to bring together older people from different ethnic backgrounds. E.MM.A recognised that many older migrants were living in substandard accommodation and that residents of all ethnicities often lived in precarious economic positions. They set out to create an inclusive, multicultural housing community for older people in the neighbourhood. The subsequent development converted an existing, dilapidated building into 15 dwelling cohousing community with a public community space and daycare facility⁷⁹. Each individual dwelling has its own kitchens and living rooms, but there is also a communal

kitchen and living room to enable residents to eat and socialise together.

Whilst most cohousing communities are initiated, developed and run by a group of residents, this model would not have been possible to people in Schaerbeek, many of whom are first generation migrants with limited language skills and a lack of financial capital. Maison BILOBA Huis was instead developed and constructed by a social housing provider and the local government, with E.MM.A managing the daycare centre and curating the social programmes that operate within the community space. Residents developed a charter for how they wanted to live together⁸⁰. Maison BILOBA Huis demonstrates that exciting models like cohousing don't have to be a preserve of the well-off, and that there is potential for agencies to work together with deprived communities to create socially enriching housing developments that can benefit the wider community.

BILOBA Huis residents with King Philippe of Belgium

Image source: Sudinfo.be



Case Study 3: London Community Land Trust, Mile End

London Community Land Trust (LCLT) is a member's organisation committed to developing 'genuinely and permanently affordable housing'. The trust constructs or purchases housing which is held in a trust legal structure, which means that the trust is able to cap house price so they remain in line with local wages.

St. Clements is a former hospital located in Mile End, London. Previously owned by the Greater London Authority and the Mayor of London, the site was sold for development in the early 2010s. LCLT was initially involved in an unsuccessful bid to purchase the site, which was won by Galliford Try Plc. As a condition of the sale, the GLA requested that Galliford Try work with LCLT. As part of the 252 dwelling St. Clements development, the LCLT was gifted land to create 23 truly affordable properties, which alongside other socially rented properties met the section 106 affordable housing requirement for the site. As part of the partnership, LCLT contributed to other key aspects of the regeneration, including the creation and management of community spaces.

23 houses were sold at prices from £130,000 (one bedroom) to £235,000 (three bedroom) – around 1/3 of the market value. Although residents are free to sell these properties, their prices are perpetually linked to the median income of residents rather than local house prices. Whilst this shouldn't be considered an alternative to social rental properties, it offers more long-term affordability than 'affordable' owner-occupier homes.



Image source and further information:
<https://www.londonclt.org/st-clement-s>



Proposed Design for 11th Street Bridge Park

Image source: OMA.EU

Case study 4: 11th Street Bridge Park, Washington DC

The 11th Street Bridge Park in Washington DC was first proposed by city authorities in 2011 as a way of converting a disused bridge into a new public amenity. The park shares some similarities with the New York City 'Highline' Park, which led to significant redevelopment in the Hudson Yard neighbourhood. The redevelopment in Hudson Yard resulted in rent increases and limited economic benefits for existing residents. The challenges faced by the local community occurred despite an inclusive, collaborative planning process for the Highline, in which the implications of the new development were perhaps underexplored.

In Washington DC, the city sought to embed the concept of equity into their planning process for their the 11th Street Bridge Park, recognising potential fears about gentrification being raised by the adjacent low-income community. As a result, the residents, developers and

the city government developed an equitable development plan, which set out a strategy for sharing the social and economic benefits of the new park. This process explicitly recognises the links between public investment (in a park) and private profit (to property developers), but transforms this situation into a positive force for the community, and mitigates against potential conflict between various partners when benefits are implicit and unaccountable. The 11th Street Bridge equitable development plan recommended a series of initiatives that preserved and expanded affordable housing and supported small businesses, ensuring that the economic benefits of new housing or retail footfall were retained locally by the long-term residents of the community⁸¹.

The equitable development plan can be viewed online here:

http://www.urbanwaterslearningnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/Equitable-Development-Plan_09.04.18_compressed.pdf

Case Study 5: West Gorton (Manchester) Urban Regeneration

West Gorton is an area that lies south-east of Manchester's city centre. Once a place with a poor reputation, West Gorton is now becoming a neighbourhood of choice⁸² after being given a new lease of life through a multi-million pound urban regeneration project⁸³. West Gorton saw a £100m public/private investment programme and has been transformed over a 10 year period⁸⁴.

The approach to regeneration in West Gorton has incorporated social elements. The regeneration provided new homes for private sale and The Guinness Partnership (local housing association) carried out an extensive refurbishment and modernisation of existing council houses and a further 171 new social rented properties have been built by Manchester City Council⁸⁵. The building of these new social homes was carried out before any existing properties were demolished. As a result, some existing residents of West Gorton have been able to stay in the area if they chose to, and have been provided new or renovated social homes of a much higher standard⁸⁶. Also, buy-to-let mortgages have been banned from the West Gorton estate, and residents must seek permission to be able to rent out their properties.



West Gorton Community Hub

In addition to the provision of new housing, the West Gorton regeneration has further provided facilities for the community including a new medical centre, pharmacy, new shops, and the extension of a local primary school. There has been further investment in jobs and career opportunities through a drama production hub, The Space Project, which is expanding into Space Futures with a commitment to employ people from the local area. There are also plans to provide a 'one stop' community hub which will co-locate a mix of public sector organisations to provide many different services such as mental health services, skills training and so on, as well as a community café⁸⁷. There has been a new community park delivered as well as green improvements to open, public space. Further plans include a £1.2m new purpose-built nursery to help improve the life chances of children in the area⁸⁸.

The regeneration of West Gorton also incorporated different types of engagement with local residents that went beyond the usual formal consultation process that urban regeneration programmes carry out. This can be seen in particular with local housing association, The Guinness Partnership. In order to get ideas and opinions from local residents about the new West Gorton park, the housing association put on a summer fayre for local families and children to enjoy, including sports, arts and crafts, a bouncy castle and other activities. Each person who contributed an idea was given a free plant to 'brighten up the local gardens'⁸⁹. The summer fayre was also an opportunity for residents to meet their new neighbours. The Guinness Partnership have also been committed to the regeneration of West Gorton on a wider level, improving the lives of local residents by providing extra funds of £50,000, to help local schools and cafes with much needed equipment, day trips, residential event and training sessions.

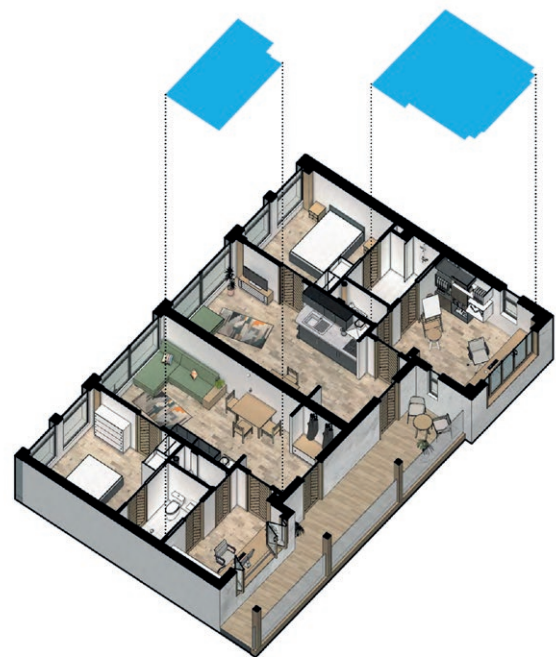
Case Study 6: Manchester School of Architecture

Since 2009, Manchester School of Architecture has been working with local government, housing associations and private developers to develop a design-led research curriculum exploring urban ageing at Masters level. The *&rchitecture* course, a collaboration between the School of Architecture and HTA Design, allows students to work with real communities and clients to produce ideas and provocations that contribute to real world development decisions.

Rather than seeking to simulate architectural practice (as most architecture courses do), *&rchitecture* attempts to provide a creative service to communities and clients by critiquing and subverting habitual models of development, and identifying new potentials through rigorous, professionally grounded design methodologies.

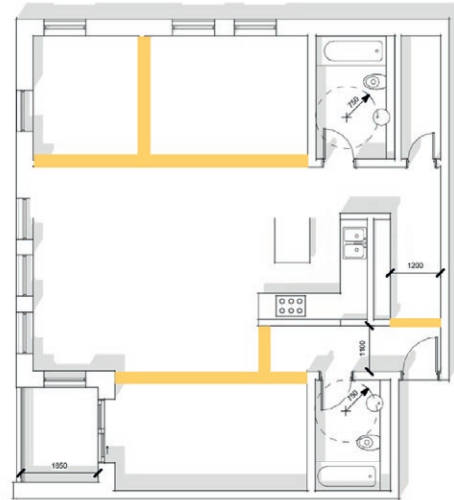
The examples below are from the 2018-19 course, and show three research projects that sought to test and explore how city centre developments would need to be different to attract older residents.

Adam Nadja based his research on the needs of older people transitioning to self-employment, either through choice or lack of opportunities within ageist workplace cultures. He proposed a housing scheme where the office was central to the design of each apartment, rather than an afterthought. His design proposed a shared atrium that all the office spaces opened out onto, creating a sociable work environment to support older workers to develop viable home businesses.

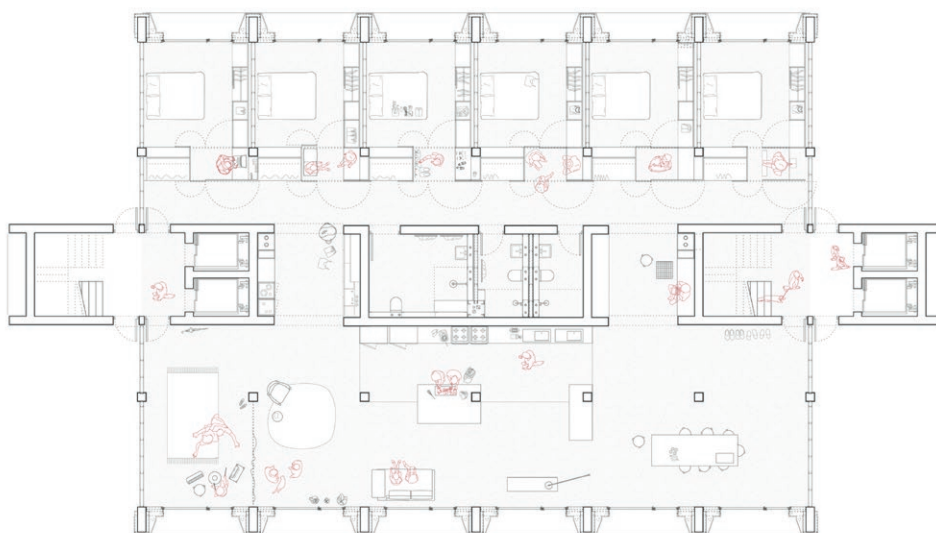




Serena Dias explored issues of flexibility, and whether a single dwelling could be designed for easy adaptation in response to a range of potential lifecycle transitions. This led her to design apartments with hidden features to enable simple alterations as the residents' needs or circumstances changed.



Celeste Tellarini explored different forms of cohousing, with an emphasis on supporting social interaction through shared activities. She proposed minimal private bedroom space but extensive communal facilities, and used her design process to question whether these trade-offs were economically viable or socially appropriate.



Case study 7: Ambition for Ageing, Manchester developing co-research approaches

Ambition for Ageing (AfA) is a £10.2 million Greater Manchester-wide cross-sector partnership aimed at creating more age friendly places and empowering people to live fulfilling lives as they age. AfA is supported by the Big Lottery Fund's Ageing Better programme, which aims to reduce social isolation of older people. Led by GMCVO, the 5-year programme is delivered by a cross-sector partnership with contractors working in 25 neighbourhoods across 8 local authorities in Greater Manchester⁹⁰.

The belief of AfA is that a series of small changes within communities will bring large scale success that will help to reduce social isolation. The programme facilitates the development of existing assets within communities allowing older people to have greater control over community investments. AfA have implemented a co-research methodology which can be defined as an approach that offers control over the research and design process, with the aim of developing sustainable projects relevant to the needs of older people. Co-research provides a method for older people to shape the design of studies and to take a leading role in initiating, developing and disseminating research.

Ambition for Ageing has found that working with older people as co-researchers or in co-design needs to be flexible and inclusive. This means giving people a diversity of ways in which to contribute that best fit their individual needs and circumstances. For example, this may include using different methods of communication such as email, telephone or face to face and ensuring all methods of communication are fully accessible (large print, reading out meeting agenda etc). It can also mean allowing older people to contribute on an ad hoc basis as

well as having more sustained and regular involvement if they wish. It needs to be recognised that whilst many older people will bring with them a long history of community participation and professional skill sets, those without such a background may feel intimidated or that this type of community involvement is 'not for them'. Therefore there is an important role for community development staff to play in building relationships and the capacity of individuals, making the co-production process flexible and transparent.

The programme has also found that engaging with existing community groups requires an awareness of the local context and the local history of communities. This can often be facilitated by the relationship building and negotiation skills of community development staff. In summary, meaningful co-production with older people requires sustained involvement in communities not only to build relationships but in order to develop inclusive ways of working that allow for a diversity of voices to be heard.



Workshop as part of the Manchester Age-Friendly Neighbourhood programme, funded by Ambition for Ageing

Image source: Manchester School of Architecture

Case study 8: Greater Manchester's Older People's Network

The Greater Manchester Older People's Network (GMOPN) was established in October 2015 following a consultation with older people in Greater Manchester. The development of GMOPN is supported by the Ambition for Ageing (AfA) programme and facilitated by Macc (Manchester's local voluntary and community sector support organisation). The aim of GMOPN is to inform and influence Greater Manchester strategies that affect older people⁹¹.

Findings from two GMOPN events in May 2019 made recommendations for different types of participation. Some older people felt that their views were less likely to be taken on board than those of younger people. Negative experiences of participation and mistrust in processes also led some to feel a degree of cynicism

about participation opportunities. Therefore, opportunities for older people to participate need to be committed to wholeheartedly or not at all.

The evaluation also found that the process needs to be clear at every stage and provide opportunities to participate as early as possible. It should be viewed as a process and ongoing conversation rather than an isolated event. Inclusion should always be a priority as should looking for different ways of including more marginalised groups and those who do not usually participate. Feedback on the process should be given throughout and any concerns addressed. It should be made clear about when feedback will be given, who is responsible for it and include what actions will be taken and when. The Older People's Board found that co-production approaches need to be open to questions, criticism and innovation.

A meeting of the Greater Manchester Older People's Network

Image source: Manchester Community Central / GM Older People's Network



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